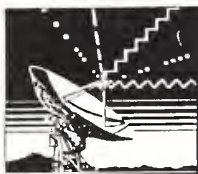


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2729

September 1, 1995

USDA OFFERS RELIEF TO FLOOD-DAMAGED STATES -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman says USDA will provide \$40 million to 14 states to repair flood damages from storms. Calling it an important step in protecting lives and property, Glickman says assistance will come from the Emergency Watershed Protection program. That program provides assistance for the removal of imminent hazards to life and property from floods and erosion caused by natural disasters. Funding will go to California, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Vermont and Virginia to repair damage from spring and summer storms, and to Florida and Georgia for damage done by Tropical Storm Alberto in 1994. Five other states will receive funding for wetlands easements. Those states are Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota and South Dakota. **Contact: Diana Morse (202) 720-4772.**

NEW USE FOR ARMY PLANTS -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is joining with the Department of Defense to find new uses for munitions plants that aren't being used. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman says USDA will administer the Armament Retooling and Manufacturing Support Initiative, which will make up to \$320 million in loan guarantees available to businesses locating on scaled-back or closed munitions plants. Glickman pointed out there are 16 such munitions plants in 12 states that could be used for the program. He added, "This program is tangible proof that federal agencies are working together cooperatively in order to improve service." **Contact: Jim Brownlee (202) 720-2091.**

FOCUS ON MEAT AND POULTRY -- Public meetings to discuss USDA's proposal to improve the safety of meat and poultry will be held at Department of Agriculture headquarters in Washington, D.C. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman says the meetings, to be held September 13, 14, 15, 27, 28 and 29, should help focus the issues important in implementing this rule. Included on the agenda are an overview of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point proposal, the changing role of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service inspectors under the proposal and using antimicrobial treatments in slaughter plants. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

FINAL WORDS ON "FRESH" POULTRY -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman gave USDA's final word on when poultry products can be labeled "fresh." Slated to become effective by next year, poultry products which have never been chilled below 26 degrees F. may be labeled "fresh." Poultry chilled below 26 degrees F., but above 0 degrees must be labeled "hard chilled" or "previously hard chilled." But poultry products that have been at 0 degrees F. or below must be labeled either "frozen" or "previously frozen." After reviewing over 26,000 comments and holding public hearings, USDA officials found consumers expect poultry labeled "fresh" to never have been chilled until frozen, or to never have been so cold it was hard to the touch. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

SOYBEAN PRODUCERS DON'T WANT REFUNDS -- Soybean producers said "no" when asked if they wanted to hold a referendum to decide if refunds should continue. USDA conducted the nationwide poll in July in cooperation with several agencies. Assessments are used for promotion, research and consumer information which strives to strengthen the soybean industry's position in the marketplace. Producers who marketed soybeans prior to October 1 could still get refunds on those marketings, based on the requirements of their home state. **Contact: Connie Crunkelton (202) 720-8998.**

CORN GROWERS IN A SPOT OF TROUBLE -- Gray leaf spot is showing up everywhere, especially in Indiana, says Purdue University entomologist Don Scott. He says gray leaf spot is especially severe in fields where corn was planted in consecutive years on the same field. Fields that have been rotated with soybeans last year and corn this year are also showing severe disease, says Scott. This has been exacerbated first by dry weather and then wet weather at planting. Scott is estimating a reduction of seven to ten percent in Indiana corn yields. **Contact: Don Scott (317) 494-4627.**

A NEW STAR IN LOW-FAT FOODS -- A cooked blend of starch, fats and water could prove to be the next "star" of fat-free foods and the agricultural community. Called "Fantesk" by chemists working for USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), chemists say the new combination could find its way into such things as hand lotions, shampoos, lipsticks, and low-fat popcorn coating. Starches and oils for the product could come from corn and soybeans, two of the Midwest's main crops. Two chemists, Kenneth Eskins and George Fanta developed "Fantesk" by combining starches, oils and water into a thick gel. To their surprise, they found the gel doesn't separate when frozen, thawed or melted. The scientists then dried the gel into a flaky material and it still didn't separate. "Fantesk" could be used to make foods that are low in fat and taste good. Eskins says they conducted tests which showed that 0.3 percent fat ice milk with two percent "Fantesk" tasted about the same as ice cream with 8 to 10 percent fat. Companies interested in developing markets for "Fantesk" are already working with ARS on food and nonfood applications. **Contact: Ben Hardin (309) 681-6597.**

TOO SICK TO MATE -- A new weapon against corn earworms could be a natural virus that makes them too sick to mate. Each year, earworms and related insect pests cause about \$5 billion worth of damage to crops worldwide. Scientists from USDA's Agricultural Research Service discovered a virus in 1994 which infects only the moths' reproductive organs. Scientists speculate that releasing virus-infected moths would render about 70 to 80 percent of their offspring sterile. While the remaining 20 to 30 percent could still reproduce, they would pass on the virus to their offspring. The scientists named the virus "gonad-specific virus" because it deforms the female's ovaries and the male's testes. ARS scientists are now conducting a field test in Stoneville, MS, and have filed a patent application on use of the virus. **Contact: Ashok K. Raina (301) 504-9396.**

FAX -- You can obtain our radio and TV programming information and the **Broadcasters Letter** through your facsimile machine by calling USDA's AgNewsFax. Use the telephone connected to your FAX machine to call **(202) 690-3944**. At voice prompts press **1**, press **4**, then to receive **Broadcasters Letter**, press **9200**; radio newslines information, press **9250**; TV contents billboard, press **9260**; TV scripts, press **9270**. After all your selections, then press **#**, press **3**, and press the **start** button on your FAX machine.

EDITED BY LORI SPICZKA HOLM

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1996 -- Packing a safe lunch is the focus of this week's Agriculture U.S.A. Lori Spiczka talks with the acting director of USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline, and with school kids who take their lunch to school. (Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1475 -- What is fresh poultry? Fresh versus frozen lamb. Packing safe lunches. Pecking order in a bee hive. How to deal with the extras from a bountiful harvest. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1988 -- The egg industry is still reeling from summer heat. U.S. green industry flourishes. Potato blight is a major concern. The 13th Conservation Reserve Program sign-up. Do farmers pollute? (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Monday, September 4, HOLIDAY. Tuesday, September 5, weekly weather and crops. Monday, September 11, cotton world supply and demand. Tuesday, September 12, agricultural supply and demand; cotton and wool outlook; weekly weather and crops. Wednesday, September 13, world agricultural production; oilseeds world markets and trade; feed outlook; oil crops outlook; rice outlook; wheat outlook. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Patrick O'Leary reports on "Fantesk," a versatile new product from the Agricultural Research Service. Lori Spiczka reports on the 13th CRP sign-up.

ACTUALITIES -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman talks about conservation themes.

UPCOMING -- Lynn Wyvill reports on new tomato mulch. Patrick O'Leary reports on USDA's "Great Nutrition Adventure."

ATTENTION BROADCASTERS: There are some satellite changes in next week's television newsfeed. Please make a note of them.

Monday, September 4, from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m. EDT. Galaxy 4 (C-Band), Channel 12, Downlink Frequency 3940 MHZ, Audio 6.2 and 6.8. Thursday, September 7 and all remaining September newsfeeds, Galaxy 6, C-band, Transponder 1, Channel 1, Downlink Frequency 3720 MHZ, Audio 6.2 and 6.8. If you have immediate downlinking difficulties, call Keystone Communications at (202) 737-4440.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.

Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

TOO HOT, TOO DRY...are words describing Iowa's current crop conditions after a Spring that began too cold and too wet, reports **Rich Balvanz** (WMT, Cedar Rapids, IA). Fields vary from lush growth to ones where the corn is dying early because of local conditions. Gray leaf spot has been a big story on farms where "no-till" practices are used to grow corn year after year. Rich says that some of the most popular corn hybrids have high susceptibility. High humidity has increased the spread of these fungi in Iowa, Illinois and Indiana this year.

BLUE MOLD...disease is affecting yields in some Kentucky tobacco fields, according to **Allen Aldridge** (Kentucky Ag Network, Louisville, KY). Tobacco harvest has begun, but corn and soybean yields will drop back to normal from last year's record crops because of dry weather. Allen started in news broadcasting 19 years ago and has been a farm broadcaster for the past eight years.

NATIONAL GRANGE...has asked their legislative staff, **Bob Frederick, Barbara Knisely, and Tom Rugg**, to provide leadership to their public affairs area as well. Bob has closely followed all the farm bills since 1970 and often has been interviewed by broadcasters covering agriculture. Their phone number is (202) 628-3507.

CROP RESIDUE...may not be sufficient after this year's soybean crop on some Nebraska farms causing farmers to alter their conservation plans. **Susan Risinger** (WJAG, Norfolk, NE) says the crop will be shorter this year because of a late start, and soil may be left vulnerable to wind and water erosion. Certain parts of her listening area received a 9-inch rainfall recently which didn't harm crops but did some structural damage. Susan says this year is setting a record for number of 90-degree plus days. Some schools are dismissing students early because of the continued heat this week. As a contrast, their hottest day on record in 1992 was 84 degrees. When they topped 100 degrees earlier this summer, it was the first time in four years.

Larry A. Quinn

LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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